

NON-TARGET SPECIES COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 8, 2003

The Non-target Species Committee convened from 6 to 8 pm on Wednesday, October 8, 2003 for its first, organizational meeting. Members in attendance were Chair Arne Fuglvog, Karl Halflinger, Eric Olson, Michelle Ridgway, Whit Sheard, Thorn Smith, Dr. Paul Spencer, Lori Swanson, and Dave Wood. Jane DiCosimo and Sarah Gaichas provided staff support. Others in attendance were John Lepore, Mary Furuness, Melanie Brown, Tom Pearson, Ben Muse, and Scott Miller.

The purpose of the meeting was to identify the terms of reference for the committee. Jane DiCosimo provided a summary of the recommendations for revising management of all non-target groundfish species by the ad hoc non-target species working group. It identified a proposed management approach, but also has identified numerous policy and legal questions yet to be answered by policy makers. The ad hoc group was interested to know whether the Council was prepared to address the policy and legal questions before initiating an analysis and how it might interact with the committee. The ad hoc group offered two analytical approaches: (1) one comprehensive analysis to revise management of all non-target species or (2) separate analyses for (a) other rockfishes; (b) other flatfishes; and (c) other species. It awaits further instruction from the Council.

The committee requested that the Council provide guidance on the committee's long term goal. The committee identified that at this early stage it was most interested in obtaining the following information from staff:

1. Table of groundfish species in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska by management category, overfishing tier, biomass, average harvest from 1999-2003, using data from trawl surveys, observer program and commercial landings
2. List of tiers and a summary of criteria for placing a species into a tier
3. List of current management categories and criteria for placing a species into a
4. List of species that are ecologically sensitive
5. Primer on overfishing and the tier structure during the December meeting from the Plan Team chairs
6. Primer on stock assessments during the December meeting from the Plan Team chairs

The committee would meet again during an evening at the December 2003 Council meeting if AFSC staff would provide presentations on overfishing and stock assessments.